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“THE FAERIE QUEENE.”

“ No daintie flowre or herbe that growes on ground,
No arborette with painted blossomes drest
And smelling sweete, but there it might be fownd
To bud out faire, and her sweete smels throwe al arownd.”

FAERIE QUEENE.

“Although Spenser is one of the great names inscribed on the rolls of English poets, he has been much more talked of than read, and less talked of than he really deserves.”

PHILIP MASTERMAN.

To those who delight in the youthful efforts of the English muse it has long been a cause of sorrow to observe the station which has been assigned to Spenser in the rank of poets. We verily believe that were it not for the efforts of Sir Walter Scott and other distinguished critics, the Faerie Queene would at this day have been banished among the ancient lays and ballads, and Edmund Spenser would find fewer readers than the most insignificant of our modern rhymesters. We cannot but regret that Spenser finds readers in this manner. How humiliating it appears to his admirers to know that the fame of their favourite depends not on his own intrinsic merits, but on the favour he may chance to find in the eyes of distinguished critics;—rising not by his own efforts, but being dragged forcibly upward by the patronage a great reviewer may deign to bestow on him. Such alas! has been the fate of Spenser. Few, very few have read him for any love they bore him, but as a task which has been imposed on them by reviewers. They take up the Faerie Queene as the school-boy takes up his grammar, with a sigh, drag heavily through it, then throw it from them with detestation and contempt. Such men—

and there is a numerous class, who read nothing but what critics applaud—deserve just the amount of pleasure they glean from the perusal. Not but that there are beauties in rich profusion scattered through the pages of the *Faerie Queene*; but how can readers who are “panting like the hart for the water-brooks,” to reach the goal of their labours, the welcome word “*Finis*,” hope to find beauties in the path they travel with such headlong speed. Beauties and faults are all mingled together in one vague unintelligible line, as a rich landscape is blent and confused to the vision of one passing in a rail-road car.

In order to form a just estimate of the merits of the *Faerie Queene*, we must take into consideration the age in which the author wrote. The age was one of peculiar splendour; the so called, “golden days of merrie England.” The age in which lived and sung the greatest poets that ever struck the vocal shell;—men who walked on earth, yet spoke with the tongues of gods. The age of Massinger and of Ford, of Beaumont and Fletcher, of Marlow, Sydney, Jonson, Haywood, Shirley, the thousand souled Shakspeare, and a host of others. The age in which Raleigh and Sydney, Essex and Leicester added a new splendour to the waning glory of chivalry. The age of the wise queen Bess, and her gallant train of young, gay and brilliant courtiers. When the immortal Bacon shook to their foundations the useless dogmas of the schoolmen, and rescued from Nemesis a name, which had else gone down to posterity arrayed in a garb of living infamy. When happy England rang with the voice of genius, and groaned under a load of glory. It seems as if Nature had called from the inmost recesses of her bosom all that could adorn and enrich, all that could ennoble and enlighten, and poured with a beneficent mind and an unsparring hand, all these dazzling treasures on one small spot of earth.

The institutions of chivalry were about sinking into a darkness from which they never emerged. Already gold and satire—commerce and Cervantes—had struck their death blow in Spain; but in France and England the memory of the chivalric Francis and Henry, and “the field of the cloth of gold,” lingered in the minds of the people, and preserved from sudden downfall and contempt, an institution which had been the boast of Europe for centuries. In

England the sun of chivalry was slowly setting, but it sat in clouds of splendour. Those who stood on the greatest eminences were the last to receive the glory of its parting beams, and by the halo which shone around them half reconciled the commons to the absurdity of their position.

Among the reading class of the community, the romantic fictions of Italy, Spain and Portugal were eagerly sought after. There were more translations of Ariosto, Boiardo, Francesco Bello, the "Chronicles of the Cid," and Vasco Lobeira, than at present exist in the English language; for as yet they had not learned to look within themselves for those reliques of chivalric poetry which the labours of Percy, Riston and others disclosed at a more modern date.

Spenser no doubt saw that while the literati admired and extolled the tales of chivalry, which had been written a century before, they were nevertheless more inclined to smile with Ariosto, and laugh with Pulci and Cervantes, than to sympathize with Francesco Bello and Lobeira. We believe that Spenser's original design was to have written a poetic romance of chivalry. But he knew that if he wrote with sincerity, he would be laughed at by the learned; such a fondness however, had he for the old legends of knight errantry, that he could not wholly abandon his first resolution; therefore he chose the most difficult, but at the same time the only method he could adopt, that of writing an allegory, wherein he might typify the virtues in the characters of brave knights, and the vices in demons, enchanters, dwarfs and giants. Spenser informs us, "that the general end of his book, is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline." But we are forced to doubt the sincerity of this protestation, and that on the internal evidence of the poem; for so continually is he bursting the bounds of allegory, and plunging with heartfelt sincerity into the wildest extravagances of chivalric fiction, that the most acute reader is put at fault in endeavouring to trace the slightest resemblance to allegory. Therefore we are forced to conclude that Spenser wrote

"Of bold men's bloody combattings and gentle ladies' tears,"

for the love which he bore the subject, not for the purpose of constructing a moral poem, and in allegory to yield to the spirit of the age, and thereby avoid the sneers of critics.

Had he lived a century earlier he would have written a poetic romance as sincere, and as devoid of all allegory as *Amadis de Gaul*, *Palmerin d' Oliva* or the *Mambriano*. But that very allegory, which it no doubt tortured the brain of poor Spenser to maintain—which he casts off wherever he dares—and which alone saved him from the scorn of envious contemporaries—has in modern days become a ground of objection to his poem. Principally on account of the difficulty of comprehension. It being necessary for a reader to follow the thread of the story, and also to draw a moral deduction from every stanza: very much resembling the gigantic effort of endeavouring to read a fairytale and a system of ethics at the same time—an effort almost beyond the power of a reader provided with but one set of thinking faculties. Therefore few of the true admirers of Spenser have read the *Faerie Queen* but a single time. They read it first for the romance and beauty of poetry, and a second time to trace the allegory. Another objection is the detestation in which literary men hold all allegory; and the hatred borne towards this figure is not entirely unjustifiable. Third and fourth class German writers have been busily engaged for the last fifty years in inundating our land with scull and cross-bone tales, which they have had the presumption to dignify with the title "*Allegories!*" Aspiring blockheads, who in endeavouring to rise on flagging pinions, where Richter, Goëthe and La Motte Fouqué could alone soar, have dimmed the fame of their great models, and brought into disrepute a figure which, when moulded by genius, becomes one of the most pleasing plans of conveying moral and religious instruction.

Although small critics may with some show of reason, condemn the *Faerie Queene* on account of the allegory, yet we cannot see with what justice they entirely discard it; in the words of Hazlitt, "they are afraid of the allegory as if they thought it would eat them!" We admit that the *Faerie Queene* must either be read twice, or that twice the time must be expended on it which would be required on an unallegorical poem of the same length, in order to come to an appreciation of its merits. But what poet we would ask is worth one reading, who is not worth a second reading? We confess we have no patience with that class of readers, who skim through a fine poem as a task. They

deserve just the pleasure that the Italian criminal received from his attempted perusal of Guicciardini, and most of them deserve his choice—the “War of Pisa,” or the Galleys.*

In the *Faerie Queene* we see all characters, all virtues and vices through the medium of the poet's mind. This quality of Spenser's poetry, has exposed him to the sneers of hypocritical readers, who affect a holy horror for egotism in all its varieties. But we defy them in the whole catalogue of English poets, to find any—excepting Shakspeare and a few contemporary dramatic writers—who “hold the mirror up to nature”—whose poetry is not in some measure tinged with the peculiarities of the poet's mode of thought. True it is that in the *Faerie Queene* we see all objects through the poet's mind, as through the painted window of a cathedral, and the whole landscape is tinted with its colouring; but they are rich, warm, glowing tints, which should displease the eye of no man; but rather add a more gorgeous appearance to the view. It would be well if most of us could always look at outward objects through a mind refined by every lofty and beautiful sentiment, enriched by every noble, pious and virtuous feeling. The same critics who scoff at Spenser's slight egotism, will sneer with Pope—mourn with Shelley—laugh with Butler—curl the lip, bend the brow, rant, rave, stamp and roar with Byron—and call it all sublime! Spenser has also been accused of immodesty—he has said things which would shock the tender sensibilities of young misses, and endanger the morals of virtuous young men. Here we must again differ from most critics. Spenser never wrote one immoral line—he never panders to depraved tastes—never offers food to vitiated appetites—never inflames the passions. Owing to the peculiar license of his age, he touches on subjects rejected by the more fastidious of our modern writers; but he never enters into detail. These passages differ as much from the disgusting licentiousness of Rochester, Wycherley, Dorset and Mulgrave, as the majestic nakedness of the *Venus de Medici* differs from the voluptuous *negligé* of an Eastern dancing girl. We can point to a passage in the ninth book of the *Paradise Lost*, far more glowing and cir-

* He chose the Galleys!

emunstantial in description than any passage in the *Faerie Queene*. Yet Milton has never been censured as an immoral poet. Marlow, Massinger, Congreve, Farquhar, even Shakspeare, are broadly vulgar in many parts; using phrases which would disgrace Billingsgate. Yet their faults are pardoned on account of their many virtues. Why should not Spenser meet with the same clemency on the same grounds?

In beauty and power of versification, Spenser excels all other English poets. A false line can seldom be detected; a rhyming word is never seen dragging in heavily at the end of a line. The verse flows on smoothly and harmoniously, with unabated melody and vigour. Although he sometimes uses an unauthorised derivative for the sake of rhyme, yet his rhyme is never overstrained or defective. A commentator has observed, "that he solemnly believes Spenser could have versified the dullest and driest bill-in-equity that ever was drafted." The stanza to which Spenser gave name, has been imitated by many, yet none have equalled the great inventor. This stanza admits of great beauty and variety of expression, and is particularly adapted to the subject of the *Faerie Queene*. It flows with an ease, regularity and dignity of cadence, which might shame many of our modern poets, who substitute ingenuity for beauty, startlingness for melody of versification. Who that has read *Thalaba* and some of the minor poems of the learned, ingenious, but tasteless *Southey*—now limping in a weary Alexandrian line,

"Like a wounded snake drags its slow length along"—

now gliding into an elegant hexameter, which the patient reader wishes may continue, but alas! disappointed, finds breaking off into a series of short, abrupt lines, which jar on the ear, and send a cold shudder to the very soul—will not turn with a cheerful heart to listen to the soft, musical cadence, which falls from the lips of Spenser's gentle muse.

In that art which Blair calls, "an imitation affected by *sound* of the thing represented," Spenser stands pre-eminent. Now we hear the stately tread of a knight's advancing steed, and the ring of his iron panoply. Now the din of battle;—the shrill sound of steel clanking on steel—the

dull heavy blow of the ponderous mace—the crash of splintering lances breaking like crisping icicles—the clang of drum and trumpet—the shouts of victory—the groans of death. Now the sound of pipe and tabour stealing through the perfumed air, mingled with the gentle voices of distant sirens. A person unacquainted with our language, could scarcely fail to detect the subject of the poem by the mere sound of the words.

Spenser belongs to that class of poets to which Wordsworth has given name. He is seldom sublime; never rises like Milton into bursts of seraphic eloquence; yet he is never low, trifling or common-place; always elegant, graceful and dignified; excelling rather in beauty than grandeur of expression. His radiance is that of a mild satellite, rather than the dazzling and overwhelming glory of a meridian sun. Let it not be understood we mean to imply that Spenser wants force and energy of expression, on the contrary, whenever force and energy is required, he uses it with peculiar justness. In the combats with which the *Faerie Queene* abounds, his descriptions are energetic in the extreme. But although the book is filled with such descriptions, it appears to us that his muse is better adapted to picture

“Some soft landscape of mild earth,”

than deeds of carnage and death—in which to produce great effect, sublimity is almost a necessary ingredient. In the words of Sir James Mackintosh, “Grandeur and energy are not his *characteristic* qualities. He seems to me a most genuine poet, and to be justly placed after Shakspeare and Milton, and above all other English poets.”

Spenser’s descriptive power is that wherein he excels; painting with oriental splendor scenes which might have employed the pencil of Claude Lorraine. It is only with effort that he bridles his copious and glowing imagination. Feature after feature, of some sun-lit landscape is unfolded, until the view becomes almost painful by the intensity of its gorgeous colouring; yet nothing is confused, all is distinct and vivid, the beholder fancies he can brush the down from the cheek of some particular rose or lily. The description of Phœdria’s island, in the sixth canto of the second book, the beautiful imagery contained in the twelfth

canto of the same book, the master strokes he lavishes on the Bower of Bliss, the Masque of Cupid and the Cave of Mammon, transport us to Fairy-land, and place Spenser on the pinnacle of fame as a descriptive poet.

In portraying female character and loveliness, Spenser evinces a discriminating power and a delicacy of conception, which is rivalled only by Shakspeare himself. All those slight, yet winning graces, which make up our idea of female amiableness, are placed before the reader with a beauty, freshness and liveliness of touch, which proves him deeply versed in the better part of woman's character; and seldom fails to fire a youthful and romantic heart, with a feeling akin to love for the ideal creations of the poet's mind. Belphebe, Britomart, Amoret, Florimel and "Una with her milk white lamb," are all distinct but beautiful forms of loveliness; divested of their supernatural attributes, they sink into those beings of grace and beauty, who cast a sun-light on the heart, and add a vigour to the step, of many a youthful traveller on life's weary pilgrimage.

Spenser's original design was to have completed the *Faerie Queene* in twelve books. "I labour," says he in a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh, "to pourtraiet in Arthure, before he was king, the image of a brave Knight, perfected in the twelve private Morall Vertues, as Aristotle hath devised; the which is the purpose of these first twelve books: * which if I find to be well accepted, I may be perhaps encouraged to frame the other part of Polliticke Vertues in his person, after that hee came to be king." Whether Spenser ever completed this design, is a matter of doubt and contention. All that remains to us are six complete books, and two cantos of "*Mutabilitie*." Some commentators assert that the whole was finished in Ireland, and lost by the negligence of a servant, during the disturbances in that country in the year 1598. Others that he never carried out his original design.†

Such are a few of the most striking beauties of the *Faerie Queene*; of the faults—and it is asserted that it has many—we have nothing to say. We never opened the

* Called in the modern editions cantos.

† We refer those curious on this subject to the life of Spenser, contained in the Rev. John Todd's edition of Spenser's Works—London, 8 vols. 1805.

Faerie Queene to search after its defects ; that is the province of more malignant critics than we aspire to be. We love Edmund Spenser, man and works, and would gladly linger in Fairy-land and expatiate on his beauties, until we burst the bounds of our magazine ; but the length of our article warns us to conclude—

“Quo musa tendit? Desine pervicax
Referre sermones Deorum, et
Magna modis tenuare parvus.”

E. J. R.

Boker

A CHAPTER ON COLLEGE WRITING.

ABOUT a year since we prepared a short essay recommending more attention to reading, writing, and speaking, than is usually given during the college course ; at the same time we insisted that they should not supplant the regular studies of the institution. Of the wisdom and expediency of those opinions we are every-day more convinced ; and it is our purpose at present to add a few long-promised hints on the subject of college composition.

In our previous essay we settled—at least to our own satisfaction—that a college student should write often. However great his abilities he never can become a fine writer without labour, and if his abilities are but ordinary, the necessity for that labour is still greater. No man ever attained a high order of style without knowing how he came there. It was by constant practice that Charles James Fox acquired that astonishing skill in intellectual gladitorship which made him the greatest debater the English parliament ever saw. “During five sessions,” he remarked, “I spoke every night but one ; and I only regret that I did not speak on that night too.” The pilgrimage to perfection in no road of greatness is an easy one. There are many hills of difficulty to surmount, and many vales of humiliation through which the mortified student must travel ; and even when he has reached the delectable mountains of first success, he beholds a wearisome journey yet to be gone

over before he gains the final plaudit and the golden crown. To those who are just setting out on this road to fame—and to more than fame if rightly pursued—to *usefulness*, we would offer a “word in season”

In running over the superficial acres of foolscap, every year covered by college writers, the reader would be struck with its general worthlessness. There would be some rich fruit, a great many flowers, but the larger portion as barren as the east wind. The grievous failure would be the general lack of purpose and of point. Let us but contrast, for instance, a portion of Webster's speech on the Public Lands, with a college essay on one of our stereotype subjects, “The Beauties of Nature,” or the “Immortality of the soul.” The subject handled by the one, will not compare in intrinsic dignity with the other; the words employed by the one have not half as many syllables as those employed by the other; the figures of speech are not half as numerous, or half so ambitious, and yet the one delights and the other nauseates. Why? Because the one had *an object in view* which he advocated in plain direct language without circumlocution or useless ornament; while the other began in words, and ended in words.

But you will say it is not fair to contrast a college boy with the most vigorous Saxon writer in our land. We do not insist upon such a preposterous thing as an equality with Mr. Webster, but on this much we do insist. Take any student of average talent, and place him before a jury where he has to defend the interests, or life of a client, or in a political assembly where he is to incite men to action; or, if you please, shut him up in his closet, to write a petition to the legislature on capital punishment, or a remonstrance to a synod on slavery, or even a newspaper article in favour of some local improvement, and in all probability he will possess many of the merits which Mr. Webster possessed, though of course in a lower degree. He will in the first place satisfy you that he had a *distinct end in view*, which is more than he had when he wrote pompous nothings about the “Wonders of Creation,” and the “Pleasures of Memory,” and the “moss grown ruins” of Rome and Palmyra. If he be a man of sense he will know, and if not, he will learn after the first failure, that in order to produce the highest effect upon his jury, or the legislature,

or the public, he must use short, simple, pointed words. In the college essay, as we commonly have it, the longer the words the higher the stilts on which to exalt a puny idea. During the course of his more practical efforts, he will also find that similes are worth little save as they illustrate his subject, and should be used very sparingly. But to the most of our young essayists here, the *figures* are the principal merit, as every one must have noticed who has paid the slightest attention to college criticism. Finally, the one production will possess a shape, a breathing form, pervaded by a current of something like reasoning; while the others are generally lifeless carcasses.

Now, by this time, my readers will, I trust, have understood that my great objection to the mass of our compositions is that they lack point, force, vitality, all those qualities which in college parlance are summed up in one general term—*manliness*. This defect can never be entirely obviated, inasmuch as students have little to do with the realities of active life, and the persuasion of their fellow men. It can be partially obviated, however, by the selection of some definite subject which can be treated within the ordinary limits of an essay, and to this subject, and to this alone, the writer should direct his attention. The usual course is to choose some theme broad enough for a volume, and then to attempt from all this surface to marshal together a few straggling, discursive generalities. Our Professor of Rhetoric is *said* to have once remarked, that a great portion of the essays handed to him commenced with the word “*Man*,” “*Man is a fallen being*”—“*Man is a glorious being*”—“*Man is a finite being*,” &c. Starting from these acknowledged truisms, the writer sets off, careering through the regions of space, and after touching at the favourite common-places of “god-like powers” and “Sir Isaac Newton and Archimedes,” and “rolling stars,” and “cloud-capped towers” he alights upon some quotation of Shakspeare, and the aerial voyage is concluded.

Instead of this random boy play, which never yet made a writer, let the student select his appropriate subject, of a simple kind, arrange it in separate heads, and then to work, slowly and laboriously. Nor let him be content to write it once, but re-write, and re-write it again, until he is well assured that there is not a word in it which is not *the very*

word, in the very place. When his work is done, if he wishes to know *how* it is done let him ask himself two questions : 1. Does what I have written *mean* anything? and 2. Have I written it in the best manner to show what I mean? When he can answer these questions satisfactorily he has already passed the wicket gate—to avail ourselves again, with due reverence, of Bunyan's unrivalled parable—and is far advanced on the road to success.

We should transgress the narrow limits which our modesty bargained for, were we to commence another branch of the subject, and we accordingly defer it to another number. The *Monthly* is a dainty craft, but of very small tonnage; very much like one of those fairy shallops in which you are rowed across Loch Katrine, and where the old Gaelic boatman will tell you that "if ye gang wi' him, you must pit your luggage in your fob." T. L. C.

SONNET.

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF WORDSWORTH'S POEMS.

Here Nature's voice speaks from the glowing page,
 Now with high melody the numbers swell—
 Now murmuring low, soft as Proteus' shell.
 Here may'st thou learn from Wisdom's lofty sage,
 Those secret yearnings of the inmost heart,
 Which the rapt soul soaring beyond its clay,
 'Mong the harmon'ous spheres in upper day,
 Breathes to itself in music. Here thou'l start
 To see thoughts inexpressible to thee—
 Murm'ring in holy contemplation's hour—
 Whisperings of angelic rhapsody;
 Which man to utter ne'er had power,
 'Till heavenly Wordsworth—*Nature's tongue!*
 Struck his seraphic lyre and musing sung.

E. I. R.

G. H. Boker

THE MIND IN RUINS.

"I've seen the wreck of glorious things; I've sighed
 O'er sculptured temples in prostration laid;
 Towers which the blast of ages had defied,
 Now mouldering beneath the ivy's shade.

"Yet oh! there is a scene of deeper woe,
 To which the soul can *never* be resigned;
 'Tis Phrenzy's triumph, Reason's overthrow—
 The ruined structure of the human mind."

KATHERINE WARE

The mind in its healthful exercise is prepared to appreciate its powers—it then realizes its delicate construction—its connection with the heart makes it more exposed to derangement. The slightest cause might interrupt their harmony and a fearful jarring ensue—this causes it truly to be a subject of dread. It is not strange that the mighty intellect of Dr. Johnson, impressed with such a horror of insanity, was prompted to pray "Oh God! afflict my body with what tortures thou willest; but spare my reason!" Other minds have been seized with a similar dread and have uttered a similar prayer.

Mania is a mystery. It has mocked the wisdom of the medical world and appalled science by its every exhibition. The physical changes which it effects can only be investigated. The nature of these changes and the manner in which they are produced, are among the secret things which belong to the Almighty. Observation has, however, so unravelled the mystery, as to show that the noblest part of man is diseased—that the mechanism of his mind is deranged.

The maniac presents the wildest, saddest sight, which it has been man's misfortune ever to behold—a sight, which, if angels wept would justly claim their sympathizing tear—for it is their brother spirit that is so affected. "The man of sorrows"—the model man—beautifully blended the human and divine, when the sufferings of those "possessed with the devils" of madness excited his generous pity, and drew out his benevolent power. If imperfect man would imitate this holy example, he would throw off his fortitude, and would at least compassionate, if he did not take up his tearful lamentation for the mighty fallen. The greatest,

most valuable gift of God—the signet with which he sealed man's superiority over the animate and inanimate creation, is temporarily, if not irrecoverably lost. A shapeless ruin remains where the splendid structure stood. Man from an intelligent, rational and moral being, becomes an irrational and lawless creature. Once the master of his will, he now no longer controls it. Every evil passion of the human heart which reason guarded in its cell, is let loose and riots unrestrained in the place recently deserted by its sentinel. As a captive he is not now subject to the laws which govern the empire of mind. The man is changed, he becomes another man, no longer marked with the distinguishing features, by which we were wont to recognize him. His affections are dethroned, his sensibilities no longer regulate his conduct, and those finer feelings of his heart, that once beat in unison with joy and sympathized with sorrow—that sought out suffering and relieved distress, are all completely forgotten. His associations are not, as formerly, linked with refinement. He has been driven out from his home in the elevated sphere of intellect, to dwell in a "horrid brain-world," where his companions are spectres and sepulchres their home. He laughs at human misery, (a laugh that makes us quake,) and resists the wrath of heaven. The sane mind pities him not half so much as he in borrowed majesty looks down and pities it. Sometimes his imagination opens into a chamber of the richest imagery, and delights the soul while it excites surprise. But the scene is soon shifted to one of terrific darkness. His day-dreams and mid night visions picture for a time prospects of happiness, and then duplicate scenes laid in the place of wailings and despair. His life is one long misery. The genius of language, though invoked, would but mock description in attempting to portray the crazed intellect—it can only enumerate feebly some of the effects of derangement and sigh out its lament over the ruins.

"If a phrenzy do possess the brain,
It so disturbs and blots the form of things,"

that all is strange. Impressions which arise in the mind are believed to be real and present existences, being viewed apart from external objects. All power to trace the relation of things is lost. Nothing is as it once was. Ap-

pearances are changed. All proportions are indistinct. Forms are distorted. The air is full of spirits—some dear some dread. Angels of mercy and messengers of evil in his visions alternately administer to his pleasure or pain. Distinctions vanish, and discrimination, he knows not what it is. Sometimes mid-day appears appalled by the blackness of night, and “the pavilion of darkness” illumined by the mid-day light. Dearest friends become the deadliest foes, and the ghost of an enemy like a torturing demon, every where pursues his footsteps to torment him on some old score.

Self-treacherous, he unconsciously unfolds all the secrets of his heart. His thoughts are all in common. His talk is his past history as well as present. The operations of his mind are distinctly seen. Transitions from “the sublime to the ridiculous” are sudden and frequent in his discourse. He at one time indulges in the most sublime flights of fancy, with here and there a truthful thought, and at another time raves on in a strain of unconnected absurdities, full of inconceivable nonsense or “rhapsodical rantings in a Maturin style.” The heart of the sane man sickens at his sanguine hopes of executing his visionary schemes—schemes too mighty for an ordinary mind even to conceive, and impossible for the greatest intellect to accomplish.

“ His brain is wrecked—
Forever in the pauses of his speech,
His lip doth work with inward mutterings,
And his fixed eye is riveted fearfully
On something that no other sight can spy.”

MATURIN'S BERTRAM.

These invisible some things are visible scourges to him. They are the causes of his mental as well as physical anguish—convulsions and curses alike spring from them. The qualities which compose his mind, are confused—not wanting—they exist in all their strength and direct in errors as once they lead to truth. From this chaotic confusion into which it is thrown, occasionally is brought to light some “giant remains” of a species of thought that once thrived there. In his “Spanish Friar,” Dryden says—

“ There is a pleasure in being mad
Which none but mad-men knew.”

Does he mean the pleasure of a self-oblivion—ah! there

may be a momentary pleasure in forgetting the grief and cares that have long troubled the soul. It may be a pleasing novelty to leave "the busy, thronging scenes" of this world, and revel in a world of one's own fancy, if this fancy-world be of one's own choice. But he forgets these griefs only to be tormented with griefs more dire, and the frantic soul is soon persecuted by a worn out novelty. Would you know the extent of his "pleasure," read the expression of his eyes. There is eloquence in them. They speak volumes to the observer. They appear as if some fiend had touched them with an unnatural lustre. As "the wild-fire of madness," flashes from them, they look despair. They change their position for weariness and pain; and parched they seek relief in rolling fiercely around. They tell of agony that can only be drowned in a flood of tears; but alas! this is a boon that nature cannot be moved to grant, even when sought by their convulsive cries and upturned glances of distress. They mirror the haggard features of Phrenzy sitting upon Reason's deserted throne. Through them we see the elements raging within—"ten thousand shapes of fury are whirling there." We see thought wildly dancing upon the heaving billows, and judgment struggling to ride upon the waves—then next we see thought thrown upon the strand, and judgment sink to rise no more.

Perhaps the annals of human misery present no spectacle so terrible, so affecting, so humiliating, as a powerful intellect, become the prey of madness. One whose services are really wanted in society, is excluded from its pale. Recently set up as the idol of the circle in which he moved, like Philistia's idol, he is now fallen and broken. What a striking contrast is shown between the man of reason and the victim of insanity. He is a pitiable object when the mania arises from a voluntary violation of the laws of his nature, but thrice pitiable is he when fright, misfortune, or disease has exiled him from the society of mind. Viewed in regard to its influence on the world, and individual happiness, the ruined mind becomes an object of melancholy interest. Milton knew its structure and its power, when he sang,

"The mind is its own place and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n."

'This power is contained within itself, and was created with it. When that which composes it, is become deranged; when we behold the misery which this derangement brings, then we can conceive how much it has contributed to individual happiness; then we perceive it is a mighty minister of good or bad; and then we may learn the import of these words, "a heaven made a hell." The interest is much more melancholy when we contemplate the immortality of mind. Born to live and act through eternal ages, its condition during its existence is determined by its present improvement. Its destiny engages all our thought. there is an instructive lesson taught in the ruins of one mind, which should never be lost sight of by fellow minds. It teaches to appreciate its powers when enjoyed, so that if the ties of reason should be ruptured here, they might be rejoined at the gates of Paradise and be enabled to approach into the presence of the source of all Reason—the great Eternal Mind.

DAVID GAMUT.

ENGLISH STRICTURES ON AMERICAN SLAVERY.

WE have often admired that kind provision of Nature which, whenever it is rather parsimonious in the allotment of its gifts, compensates the deficiency by bestowing a degree of vanity sufficient to keep the individual in blissful ignorance of his inferiority. But when we see men, or nations, cherishing so exalted a sentiment of self-esteem as to exult perpetually in their immeasurable pre-eminence over all others, we cannot but consider it a lamentable perversion of the bounties of Providence.

The English, many of them at least, have long been in the habit of looking down upon the rest of the universe from the comfortable elevation of their fancied superiority, and "thanking Heaven that they are not as other men." In every true born Briton, this feeling amounts to monomania; he believes that his idolized country ineffably excels all her competitors in every possible way; her sol-

ders are all demi-gods ; her statesmen are all Solons, and her sky is the only place where the sun shines. When about to visit a foreign country, he dons the whole panoply of his cast iron prejudices. It is amusing to witness the strange antics and listen to the sage remarks, of some of those who have condescended to visit our republic. One shrewdly suspects us of impiety, because we have no ruined cathedrals, a thousand years old ; and another is shocked at the absurd idea of supposing the suffrages of a million of freemen a better proof of ability to rule the state, than the fact that somebody's ancestor did something nine centuries ago. All English travellers of the true orthodox stamp, the Trollopes, the Halls, and the Dickensens, fall into the same general routine. They are in raptures with the *Canada* side of Niagara, at the north ; and indulge in a burst of burning sarcasm against slavery, at the south. The latter subject is the national hobby. Every petty book-maker is, *ex-officio*, a furious declaimer against American baseness, American inconsistency, and American cruelty. As the *soi disant* philanthropist advances toward the southern part of the Union the storm is slowly gathering ; and when Mason and Dixon's line is fairly crossed, it breaks out in all its violence ; the thunders of denunciation are heard ; the vivid lightning of contemptuous phillipic flashes before our eyes, and a deluge of tearful compassion falls upon the earth.

Among those who have been noted for the virulence of their tirades on the horrors of slavery, the author of "American Notes," shines conspicuous. He utters scarce a syllable with regard to what he himself saw ; but amuses himself with drawing terrific pictures of what he fancies it *must* be. "Directly" he approaches this theme, all things else fade into insignificance. The subjects which formerly lay nearest his heart, and upon which he expended the most gigantic labours of his intellect, are now forgotten. No more are we edified with profound reflections on cork soles, top boots, and water jugs ; no longer do we hear grave disquisitions on the depth and consistence of the mud of republics. Even those fascinating creatures, the swine, upon whom he cast the pearls of his eloquence ; for whose misfortunes he cherished so deep and so lively a sympathy ; whose joyous gambols were wont to give him such exqui-

site pleasure ; and in the study of whose manners and customs he was so completely absorbed ; even they pass by unheeded, "unhonoured and unsung," and to adopt the author's own elegant phraseology, "go grunting down the kennel," into oblivion. However, it is hoped that none will construe this last remark into a censure on Mr. Dickens for turning his attention to those trivial matters, which would have escaped the notice of most men. No such censure is intended. And indeed, it is highly commendable in an author, to choose a subject perfectly suited to his taste and capacity.

But seriously, it is provoking to be compelled to endure the contemptible remarks, and listen to the compounds of folly, ignorance, and malignity, which are inflicted upon us by paltry foreign scribblers. Slavery, in the abstract, cannot be defended ; and none thus attempt to advocate it. But it is self-evident, that till it is shown that it can be abolished without endangering the well-being of the body politie, and of the slaves themselves, the crime of its existence rests with those who *originated* the accursed system. But England, and not America, is chargeable for the horrors of slavery in this country. English rapacity seized, with eager haste, the first opportunity for its introduction ; and English rapacity perpetuated it in defiance of the efforts of the colonists to arrest its progress. The first colonial assembly of Virginia, feeling that slavery was abhorrent to every sentiment of humanity, and knowing that it must, sooner or later, prove detrimental to the prosperity of the state, often passed laws prohibiting the importation of slaves, and implored the king to render the prohibition effective by yielding his royal assent. But British cupidity demanded that the infamous traffic should be protected, and the clamours of British avarice drowned the feeble voice of humanity and justice. British influence even prevented the passage of a bill permitting the planter to emancipate his own slaves, because it was apprehended that such a law might prove adverse to the interests of the mother country. In the original draught of the Declaration of Independence, this interference in behalf of slavery and the slave trade, was a distinct charge against the king of England. We quote the words : "Determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for sup-

pressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or restrain this execrable commerce." The broad ægis of British power was interposed between the inhuman system, and the weapons of those who would fain have struck it to the earth. Immediately after the yoke of England had been cast off, Virginia exercised her newly acquired liberty in suppressing that traffic which England, to her everlasting disgrace, had supported with all her mighty influence. Thirteen years after this, a bill, having the same object in view, was introduced into Parliament, and *lost* by a considerable majority, although defended by the talents of Wilberforce, and the overwhelming eloquence of Fox. The very year, 1794, in which the slave trade was suppressed by the federal government of the States, the same bill was rejected by the House of Peers, by a vote of *forty-five to four*, and it was not passed till after an incessant contest of sixteen years duration. The nation clung to the infernal trade with an iron grasp, because it afforded a lucrative employment for their mercantile marine, and contributed to fill their coffers, though with the price of blood. Their insatiable love of gain, however acquired, is as active as ever. A noble lord has lately affirmed, before the House of Peers, that "*English capital yet supports the slave trade.*" And now, with all these facts before them, they have suddenly been transformed, theoretically at least, into a clamorous race of rabid abolitionists, proclaiming themselves the lights of the world. Utterly ignorant of our system of internal polity, and of the real state of the slave population, and illustrating their general acquaintance with our country by the grossest topographical blunders; they yet have the effrontery to dictate to us, the time and manner of freeing ourselves from the evils, which they themselves have thrust upon us.

When slavery might have been destroyed easily, and with entire safety, and when they who alone had the power, were importuned to crush it, they refused because it would involve the loss of a certain number of pounds, shillings, and pence; but now when they can gain a reputation for high-toned benevolence at small cost, they are in a perfect frenzy of compassion for the very negroes whom they tore from their native land and consigned to bondage. The strong probability that immediate emancipation would be

succeeded by indolence, and consequently, want, among the slaves, the imminent danger of tumults and violence are all overlooked by these disinterested philanthropists. When the system was but a pustule upon the surface, they fostered, instead of removing it; but now, when it has become an unsightly tumour, penetrating to the vitals of the State, and implicating the very veins and arteries of her existence, they thunder their anathemas against America, because she hesitates to bare her bosom to the knife and cautery of the operator.

It offends us to the soul to hear the hypocritical cant of a certain class of these men. Can these warm friends of humanity belong to that generous nation who receive the idol Juggernaut under their kind, protecting care, and eke out a miserable pittance by taxing the squalid wretches who congregate to perform their fiendish orgies; who have rendered themselves forever infamous by their inhuman policy in the East; whose brutal soldiery have within the present century committed outrages in this country, which no American, to this day, can remember without the blood boiling in his veins; and who have offered a premium for the scalps of the citizens of the very state whose inhumanity they are now deplored with such floods of simulated tears! How well does this affectation of high-wrought sensibility become them!

We must confess, that we are by no means free from national sins, and some deplorably great ones; but we protest against being branded as the vile supporters of a vile system, by the very men who absolutely forced it upon us, and who have yet to demonstrate to the world that they have received an accession to their stock of national morality.

THEODORUS.

SAMUEL BUTLER.

If we raise the curtain of time which shuts out the stage of life during the civil wars of England, and note the actors who appeared and played their parts in that

strange tragedy; among the motley crowd of long faced puritans, and plain dressed, simple Quakers, of roundheads, cavaliers, preachers and poets, there is no one of such great worth, who has passed off with so little notice as Samuel Butler. Of the ingratitude which has been charged upon England for the neglect of her noblest sons, no object has inherited a larger share than Butler. But, unlike Milton, age has not sufficed to give to his labours their due reward. His poetry seems to have been of no particular kind. It is a mongrel of epic and dramatic. His verse is of no set measure, but constitutes one long strain of jingling rhyme. His ideas, where his theme will admit them to issue untrammelled from his mind, are noble and lofty. But he did not sing of "fair women and brave men," nor as Byron, of a wanderer over the ruins of fallen cities, nor like Shelly, of fairy's transporting mortals to their bright abode among the twinkling stars, pointing them to the far distant earth, telling of by-gone days, and revealing the dark mysteries of the future. His scenes are of the stern realities of his own day; one of the most gloomy in the annals of this sea-girt home. His characters are designed as burlesques on those public servants whom the world revered as wise and great. Who fails to recognise in the portly Hudibras, the strong marked features of Cromwell, and in his friend and sturdy backer Ralphe, the great politician, Sir Harry Vane. His hero wooed a fair one, as the usurper wooed the state, and in his last epistle to his lady love, is portrayed in the brightest colours, the feelings of the republicans towards the commonwealth. Who that has felt an interest in the welfare of the lamented Charles, does not regret that there was not numbered among his friends, men who would have answered his foes with the firmness and forethought of the loved one of Hudibras.

But the great strength of Butler is in his cutting irony; his great beauty is his brilliant wit. There is no man who has written in the Saxon tongue with such sarcasm as he used towards the mock religion of his day—when men were judged as saints by the length of their names, and with long faces expounded hard texts to the soldiers whom they drilled to fight against their lawful sovereign. With what ridicule does he laugh at the founders of the society of Friends, who, dressed cap-a-pie in leathern garbs,

believed the second advent was at hand, and assembled to meet their Judge, with *quaking* knees. As a scholar of that age, Butler stands high. Although, as his biographer tells us, his limited circumstances would not permit him to receive a thorough education, yet his writings are fraught with classical allusions, and all that history could furnish to add lustre to his poem, has been garnered with a master's hand. The modern languages have not escaped his scrutinizing eye, for he has given us illustrations from every nation and every tongue. There is no character, from the Jewish Rabbi to the Hindoo slave, that he has not woven into the thread of his story. In general, his language is pure Saxon—save in his bombastic speeches, into which importations are brought from foreign idioms.

It is urged against Butler, that at times he is vulgar and obscene. But is this a fault for which they would obliterate his works, and with them his name? If the strictest rules of morality are to be observed in our choice of literature, we should be compelled to erase from our list many of whom we are justly proud. Let those who would spurn Butler for this fault, mete to others the same measure. Let them consign to oblivion the great and good Dean Swift; let them trample upon the fair form of Shakspeare's comic muse; let them sully the fame of Smollet, and cast from the literary casket the works of the most admired writers of his age. We must consider the times, and remember that nothing would suit the taste of the people unless savoured with the spice of vulgarity. And further, in the words of a late reviewer, whether a thing shall be designated by a plain noun substantive, or by a circumlocution, is a mere matter of fashion. We should be careful how we pass a harsh judgment upon the age of Butler, for our sayings may seem trite and vulgar to our descendants and be condemned by them.

What recompense has posterity awarded to the memory of this great man? He is allowed undisturbed possession of six feet of his mother earth. No monument is raised to perpetuate his fame; not even a simple stone points to the traveller where rest the remains of one of the ablest defenders of the government of England; of him who was to Charles what Milton was to Cromwell, an adoring friend and sage adviser. Not like Alaric, do the waters roll over

his breast, but the flood of mammon has rolled on, and now over the grave of Butler is raised a wall to separate the highway from the splendid tombs of those whose wealth was their only claim on memory. The only things of life which visit his grave are the morning-glory, and the ivy-green, fit emblems of such a man. And here we fear his fame must rest, until some more generous race shall move his bones to the charnel-house of England's beauty, glory, and wit, with this simple epitaph upon his tomb—*The Author of Hudibras.*

BAREBONES.

ITALY.

The eye of man regards with pleasure the victims of time. It turns from the slender sapling to the majestic monarch of the forest—the seared oak of an hundred seasons, recognizing in age, a native grandeur. Thus would we turn, from the contemplation of modern principalities, which have sprung up as the mushrooms of a morning, and reflect upon the fluctuations of fortune around the seven hills of Rome. Most truly could she say before Europe was, I am : she had flourished for centuries and was in her decline, while yet the gods walked upon the earth, and conversed with man face to face. Those days have passed ; eighteen hundred years have rolled by bearing with them changes which have disguised the earth, but still Italy remains the centre of the sphere towards which all are attracted—the pole to which the needle of the mind constantly turns to find objects worthy of study. As each year elapses, rapacious time commits new ravages upon this precious spot, which serve to make it more sacred to the scholar and the poet. The luxurious climate and inviting scenery call upon man to abandon the halls of dissipation and give himself up to solitude and ruminations ; leaving the joys of the wine cup and the dance to those who can see no beauty in vineyards and myrtle groves ; who prefer the dazzling lights of a carousing hall, to the serene reflection of the moon as she glimmers through the crevices of some dilapidated temple.

The histories and traditions concerning ancient Rome, were of so wonderful a character, that they engendered the most romantic inspirations. With every ruinous column and pile of stones, there was connected some tale of blood or glory, and the ingenuous from all quarters of the globe, flocked thither to behold the great remnant of antiquity which had stood through so many ages, as monuments in a grave yard to point to the last resting place of the illustrious dead.

It was to gain the inspiration of these southern climes that Byron forsook the gay crowd of London society. The nature of his disposition and the influence of his education caused him to disdain the formalities of a British drawing room. He could wander among the statues and memorials of English glory, unmoved by fancy and undisturbed by feeling. But when he felt the influence of an Italian sun, when he crossed the Alpine gates of this garden of the muses, the blood flowed more swiftly through his veins. As he passed each consecrated spot, now treading the lofty ruins of the Coliseum, and now lingering beside the fountain of Nature's nymph, listening to the songs of the evening warblers in her grove, the power of association awakened the man within him, calling forth bright and beautiful thoughts, such as Italy alone could produce. He had mingled in the gay dance with the proudest and fairest of Northern dames; he had been favoured by their smiles and wounded by their shafts, but sweeter far to him, was the loving glance of the dark eyed Southern lass, which seemed to speak in lines that breathed of heaven. He sought out the tombs of departed genius—on such a shrine to offer up his orisons to nature; and if the inhabitants of the world of spirits, are allowed to witness the transactions of mortals, surely the shades of Tasso and of Dante must have rejoiced at the adoration of such a mind.

It was not for Byron alone that Italy possessed such attractions. Almost every poet who could lay any pretensions to genius, has disclosed an ardent longing after this paradise, where the snows and winds of chilly winter refuse to enter and mar the perpetual summer—a desire to survey its beauty and grandeur, that they might profit by the inspiration of such "holy ground." The unfortunate Shelly found there a watery grave. Alas! how often does the

greedy ocean engulf the proudest of earth's treasures. Ere yet the melancholy of the boy had yielded to the sternness of the man, that wonderful spirit departed to learn the reality of a world from which it seemed to have wandered in infancy. Shelly was not a fit inhabitant for earth. If such a thing were possible, we might suppose that a being who was destined to live in some fixed star, was by mistake born upon our planet, and the angels jealous of our glory had come as water ouphes to bear him to his appropriate dwelling place. If Italy was the theatre of no other event, she would claim our veneration as the land from which Shelly embarked on the ocean of eternity.

But he did not leave us without a token to remind us of his visit. He took down the harp from the willow, and touching it with flying fingers, produced wild and uncouth strains, such as never before had been heard on earth. Men paused and listened to tones which spake of other worlds—the broken sighs of transplanted genius. He felt no communion with the race amidst whom he was placed, and sought for solitude among the hills, on deserted lakes, and above all upon the ocean. The tempest told him of a home which his fancy adorned with intellectual delights, of which men may not dream. In the war of the waves as they met and hurled their spray towards heaven, he heard the sighings of a power, which, if loosened, could laugh at the proudest efforts of man—before which empires would vanish as dew drops before the sun. The raging fire of his soul was soothed to a gentle pleasure, while he was tossed by the heaving of that restrained power, and smiled as it appeared striving to break its bonds and cast him from its bosom. In his roamings he met with one familiar spirit—Byron who loved to lay his hand on ocean's mane, and seek to calm it as he would a rampant steed. Like two friends who met unexpectedly in a stranger land, they clung to each other. Side by side they would walk the shores of the Adriatic, and in one small boat would tempt its rage and smile at its angry mutterings. This happiness was too melancholy to last. Byron enjoyed the mournful satisfaction of lighting the funeral pile of his friend, and turned with sickening heart from the scenes where they had lived and loved together.

It was from Italy that the great and good John Milton

sought for instruction before he attempted his "Paradise Lost," although conscious of his immense powers, he sought to profit by the experience of one who had traversed the valley of the grim shadows in his imagination and painted shapes of the unbosomed future. Milton, great as he was, would not launch his bark on that perilous sea, unguided by the experience of all who had sailed on it before him. He wished to discover a deeper and a surer passage, but he spurned not the charts of Virgil and of Dante. Long and earnestly he studied them until familiar with each rock and shoal; then he gave his own sails to the breeze and was his own pilot.

Historians, painters and sculptors, no less than poets, have all sought in Italy for their materials, their ideas, and their models. Throughout the successive improvements in science and the arts, we still hear of many, who, if not born beyond the Alps, have gone thither to study and perfect themselves, calling it their home.

URSACHEN ZUM LIEBEN.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GLEIM.

Love is where the eagle flies
See—he soars above!
Love is where the sea-fish glides,
All is full of love.
In the garden, in the vale,
On the hill and in the dale;
In the court and in the hall,
True love reigneth over all:
Love in heaven and earth we see,
Shall I then unloving be?

CARLOS.

THE BRETHREN OF THE CROSS.

A very interesting and instructive work might be written upon the history of fanaticism—for so obstinately and continually is the human mind prone to run to extremes in every subject on which it is engaged, that there is no time when fanatics have not existed, no country in which they have not flourished—while so numerous are the forms which they have assumed, so varied the circumstances which have given rise to them, and so singular the aspects under which they have exhibited human nature, that the record of them could not but be at once both curious and valuable.

Of the many fanatical sects which have at different times amused us by their follies, astonished us by their success, or appalled us by their enormities, there is scarcely any one more remarkable, whether for the strangeness of its tenets, or the extent to which it spread, than that known by the name of “The Brotherhood of the flagellants,” or “The Brethren of the Cross.” The opinion that personal suffering in the present life would insure happiness in the future world has been prevalent almost from time immemorial; and many have been found in all ages who willingly embraced the hope thus held out to them of building their own road to heaven. After the first century it was received and practised upon by some in the Christian church, and about the tenth or eleventh century, the priests, as well as the more devout of the laymen, are found undergoing these sufferings, in imitation of those of the Saviour; expecting by virtue of them to be able to demand salvation at his hands. Notorious among those who were accustomed to engage in these expiatory mortifications of the flesh, was a monk of St. Croce d’Ancians, Dominicus Soricatus by name, a man zealous in all sorts of inflictions and devotions and the first of whom we hear as employing self-scourging as a mode of penance; this he did both upon his own person, and by the strongest recommendations to those under his care. His example and teaching came to be so generally followed that by the time of St. Anthony, in the early part of the 13th century, almost every one carried a scourge of knotted cord, with the blows and wounds of which he

would pay the penalty imposed upon him for his sins, either in private, or if he wished to be more severe in his abasements, he would join the processions, which had already begun to be formed, and following some priest, would pace the streets, tearing his naked back before the passers-by. But these flagellants had not as yet been organized into a separate sect; they were merely followers in the footsteps of some of their old saints and anchorites, having, however, nothing to distinguish them from the great mass of the church, nor claiming anything for their peculiar form of penance over others—expecting benefit from it only in proportion to its severity. In 1260 Rainer of Perugia, a hermit and monk, and a man filled with fanatical notions, and fond of distinction, began to preach the absolute necessity of these scourgings as a guarantee of salvation: being gifted with that wild and impassioned eloquence by which the mob are so easily taken—he soon gathered around him a group of enthusiasts as reckless as himself, who being animated by zeal for the cause which they had espoused, as well as by conviction of the importance of the prize for which they were striving; gave themselves, body and soul, to the course on which they were entered; their homes and families were left, their persons mortified; their garments cast aside—while with moanings, and lamentations, and prayers, they passed from town to town, and from country to country, calling aloud to repentance and lacerating their limbs and bodies with the scourges which they bore, till the blood ran down upon the ground from their many wounds. The people thronged to the processions which were formed in every place. The priests with banners and torches at their head. The princes of the land were scourged in the halls of their palaces; the peasant scourged himself, kneeling on the cold earth which floored his hut. "Music was then silent—the song of love echoed no more, nothing was heard but atoning lamentations."

While this mania was yet in its height the dreaded plague which for a long time had been desolating Asia, broke out in Europe, and commenced its ravages with appalling fury; death, at all times terrible, now came armed with added terrors, and although five centuries have rolled away and been numbered with the past, since his black wand fell thus fearfully upon the nations, yet they even now shudder

as they think upon his dealings, and although the dim light of the uncertain history of those dark days cannot reveal to us half the horrors of that period, yet enough remains to tell us of scenes soul-sickening, and without a parallel on earth. Who ever hears of the plague-spot without fear? Who ever speaks of it but as the emblem of all that is awful and deadly? The plague-spot was then in every house—"the black death" was in every place, and twenty-five millions of Europe's inhabitants fell beneath his touch. The miserable people fled like frightened birds, to hide themselves from his presence. The cities were deserted—death was on the highway, the plague-spot fell upon the wretches there, the road-side was their only couch, the sands that blew over them their only grave. Many buried themselves from the world in their houses—barring out the light and free air of heaven; the pestilence was not excluded, it came but the sooner. The halls of revel were sought and many drowned there, as far as they were able, all thought of the present, and all care for the future in debauch and the bowl; but they sank by the table where they sat, and perished where they sank, the wine cup in their hands, and the song of "the wine bibber" on their lips—some ran "howling to their Gods"—thronged the churches, knelt to their crosses, prayed to their saints, embraced the reliques in which they had trusted for safety, and died as they grasped them. If aught could make a people think, it would be scenes like these; if they never thought before they must think now—destruction was around them on every side—its livid impress was fixed, day by day, upon thousands beside them, yet there was no way to escape, they had but to stand and gaze, horrorthicken, gloomily expecting their own fate, or to sink down in despair at the anticipation of it; their hearts failed them and many died from fear:

"It was as if the dead could feel
The crawling worms around them steal;
And shudder as the reptiles creep,
To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
Without the power to scare away
The cold consumers of their clay."—THE GIAOUR.

The dreary song of the flagellants arose as they toiled on upon their singular errand. Their cry was "repent,

repent, suffer as your Saviour suffered, and be saved;" "Look at our haggard forms and wounded bodies, they testify to our sincerity, follow us, and we will in truth show thee the way." The crowds whom fear and agony had driven from their homes, eager to secure an interest in a world to which so many thousands of their fellows were hastening before their very eyes; and thinking that this might truly be the way of which they were in search, gathered around the banners of the processions and began to swell the mournful bands, by the addition of thousands and tens of thousands to their ranks; but the plague-spot was upon them too; they bore its seeds from place to place, scattering them wherever they went; and in numbers they perished in their journeyings, but for a time their influence was unbounded. They carried every thing before them, so powerful was the effect which they produced that "the most unfeeling could not refrain from tears, discordant parties were reconciled, usurers and robbers hastened to restore their unlawful gains, and criminals, before unsuspected, came and confessed their crimes."

The plague passed by, and with it the cause which had lent so much fervor and enthusiasm to the followers of the flagellants; artful and intriguing men came to be their leaders, and these made the expeditions a source of private aggrandizement to themselves. The priests and the church were set at defiance, the law, both moral and civil, contemned—and they degenerated into a crowd of mere wandering mendicants, whose insolence and extortions made them but little better than a licensed brigandry, feared and hated in all countries, and by all classes—so that very shortly the governments, both secular and ecclesiastical, became in various places arrayed against them, resolved on their extermination. But they continued, despite all these, to survive and flourish until so late as 1418, when the anathemas contained in the decrees of the council of Constance against them succeeded in effecting their final dissolution.

ZALA.

EDITORS' TABLE.

At a somewhat insuspicious period we bring the present number of the "Monthly" before our readers. Little chance of welcome is there to the messenger whose coming reminds us of a return from the charms of rest and social enjoyment, to the dull, plodding duties of the student's life. Such, in a measure, is the office of the Monthly; but it comes to minds warmed by the genial influence of home, and although it may savour somewhat of college labour, we are yet sanguine enough to believe that, by some at least, its appearance will be hailed with pleasure. And we are the more bold in expressing this opinion, by reason of our confidence that the reputation for excellence hitherto established by our magazine, will be in no wise diminished by the character of the present number. A knowledge of the relaxation of mind produced by a long period of inactivity, such as that naturally looked for in a college vacation, had led us to fear the necessity of an apology for ill digested matter, or at least for some considerable delay in publication, but the punctuality with which our contributors have come forward, in connection with the sterling character of their offerings, has saved us from the mortification of such a step, while at the same time it augurs well for the continued prosperity of the "Monthly." For well do we know that it needs nothing but a prompt support from its contributors, and an impartial consideration of its merits from others, to ensure it a long and flourishing existence. Already have the difficulties and discouragements incident to its commencement, been overcome. Already have the fears of those interested in its success been put to rest. And now it is pressing boldly on "in the full tide of successful experiment." This number of the Monthly will be found to contain somewhat less than the usual amount of poetical matter; the muses have refused to lend their accustomed assistance. How it is that this should be the case at the very period, when, of all others, we might look for an exhibition of the poet's fire, when the impressions made by "bright eyes and fairy graces," the very source of inspiration, are still fresh and vivid in the minds of those who have shared in the delights of the late vacation, we can by no means determine. We have but little fear, however, of any disappointment upon the part of our readers, so long as we are able to supply the vacancy by means of sterling prose. In making this observation let us not be understood as intending to discourage those who have in view the cultivation of the muses; such is not our intention, true poetry will always find a ready reception in the pages of the Monthly—but the nonsensical outpourings of a mawkish sentimentality will not be allowed to usurp the place of worthier matter. And while it shall be our endeavour to diversify the pages of the Monthly by an agreeable variety, with frequent change from "grave to gay, from lively to severe;" calling for this purpose upon the aid of both prose and poesy, it shall likewise be our task to see that this is not accomplished at the expense of solidity and correctness.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The article on Animal Magnetism is valuable as a specimen of profound reasoning, and as establishing the truth of that science. The extreme depth of thought, however, exhibited in every sentence, would, we fear, place it beyond the comprehension of our readers.

The author of Transubstantiation has almost frightened us by the length and number of his quotations. The subject is not suited to our pages.

"Stanley's" communication will appear in our next.

"The Future," "The tomb of Virgil," *et omne id genus*, are rejected.